

HB 1532

It was a parent choice for us several years ago to send our children to St. Anne's for junior high school and St. Mary's for high school. We didn't expect the state to pay for the tuition for our children. We made the sacrifice to send them to a private school. Why now should we as taxpayers help fund more than \$3,000 per student to families who choose to send their children to a private school. St. Mary's stands to get more funding than 68 of our rural schools do.

Speech/Language and Learning Disabilities exist in many children throughout the state. The private schools do not hire specialists to provide service to these students. They are served by the school district in which the school exists. In reality, the private schools can turn away low performing subgroups while the public schools cannot. Private schools can also "kick out" a student if they cause trouble or are a behavior problem. I saw this happen when one of my children attended St. Mary's High School.

The thing that really upsets me is the fact that the private schools can accept these public funds without any accountability. I know firsthand that the public schools have many forms that must be completed and submitted to DPI. If the public schools do not complete and submit these forms, they stand the risk of losing their accreditation.

If this bill passes, I firmly believe that the public schools will receive less dollars in foundation payments. The money must come from somewhere and I strongly believe that foundation payments will be less because education funds all come out of the same original source. Plus, there is absolutely no benefit to the rural schools, just the urban ones.

There are families who already have children in the private schools so why should we give money to those families. They made that choice and are apparently paying the tuition just as we did when our children attended private school.

Personally, I don't understand how it can be legal to use public funds to fund a private school. This is an urban issue because that's where the private schools. Why should the rural taxpayers fund private schools in the urban areas.

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